

This Girl's Life Part Two

by Becci Wooster

Category: Dawson's Creek

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 1999-09-04 08:00:00

Updated: 1999-09-04 08:00:00

Packaged: 2016-04-27 09:11:29

Rating: M

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,758

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: Dawson tries to stop Joey making a life-or-death decision. Literally.

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Shimmer

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> By Becci Wooster<p><p>

Disclaimer - Don't own them. Is it just me, or could this be a title sequence gag for 'The Simpsons'? Bart writing disclaimer after disclaimer...

Rating - I suppose an R is a guideline. It's not so much the graphical content as much as it is the subject matter.

Summary - Dawson tries to stop Joey making a life and death decision. Literally.

Author's Note - Can I please thank everyone who's written to me? Within 24 hours, I had about 8 e-mails. I think you've each got your own very valid beliefs and I thank you for sharing them with me. Feedback is always very welcome.

* * *

><p> Capeside, June 5th, 2001

Dawson was on his bed, thinking. It was something he had done for the

two past nights, but obviously, he had not done enough of it. He had planned the discussion he would have with Joey over and over, but he had never imagined that she was opting for abortion. He had noticed her growing distance over the past few weeks, and he had assumed Joey was frightened. He imagined going over to her house, proposing marriage to her, and then hugging her, trying to comfort her worried mind. They would tell their parents together, and face the consequences of their actions. Together. He hadn't planned on her being so adamant about not having the baby. He loved Joey, and no matter what she did, he always would. But how would he face her knowing she had willingly killed their baby? The thought had plagued him all yesterday, overnight, and was now worrying him this morning.

"Dawson? Your mother's on the phone," Mitch called from downstairs. Dawson picked up his phone, and pressed the talk button.

"Hi, mom," he said.

"Hey, honey. What's wrong?" she asked

"What do you mean?"

"I can tell by your voice. What's wrong?" Dawson smiled despite himself. His mother could always tell when he was upset. It was one of the things he missed about her not being at home.

"It's Joey..." he confessed.

"What's happened?" his mother asked.

"Oh, mom..." he began. He told his mother what had gone on. She listened; told him she was disappointed in him, but would support him, gave him advice, and told him to tell his father. She offered to come to Capeside, but he refused, knowing she needed to be in Philadelphia.

* * *

><p> Dawson was eating his lunch with his father, about to raise the subject of Joey, when the doorbell rang. His father went to the door, and immediately, Bessie Potter's voice filled the house.<p>

"Where's Dawson?" she asked. Mitch, surprised by her anger, pointed toward the kitchen. She walked through to the room, followed by Mitch.

"Bessie...I guess you know," Dawson said, looking tentatively at his girlfriend's sister.

"Yes I do, and you've got some explaining to do," Bessie said, putting her hands on her hips.

"Can I ask what this is all about?" Mitch asked.

"Well, go on, Dawson. Tell him," Bessie challenged. Dawson took a deep breath. He felt like he was just about to jump off a diving board into shark infested waters.

"Dad...Joey's pregnant," he said softly. Mitch's mouth dropped

open.

"What?" he asked.

"I'm so sorry, Dad. I was just about to tell you..."

"Dawson George Leery..." Mitch began.

"I suppose you'd like to know how I found out," Bessie interrupted. "My little sister was too scared to tell me, so she left me a note at home. I just came home for my lunch break, and the house was empty. Lying on the table was the following message... 'Bess, I'm pregnant. There's no other way to say that. I've told Dawson. He wants us to get married, but I want an abortion. I can't be strong like you. I'll be back this evening, but please don't discuss this with me. It's my problem, and I'll sort it out, Joey.' Now I thought you'd like to hear that, Dawson. My own kid sister wouldn't tell me that to my face."

"I'm sorry. She told me on Monday night. I went to see her yesterday morning. I asked her to marry me. I said we could raise this child together, and that she didn't have to be frightened. I offered to give her the support she needs. She told me she was going to get rid of it. It's my baby too, Bessie. And I don't want to get rid of it...but there's nothing I can do about it." Dawson paused, tears starting to run down his face. Bessie looked at him, tears falling from her eyes too. She hugged him, touched at the maturity and sensitivity shown by this eighteen-year-old.

"You know what? I came here just about ready to deck you," Bessie admitted, smiling. "But now I'm wanting to kick Joey in her butt. I don't know what's got into her recently," she added.

"I know. It's been worrying me too. When she told me about the baby, I thought that was it. But now, I'm not so sure...she's not the Joey I've known all my life." Bessie nodded at Dawson.

"So what are we going to do?" Mitch asked.

* * *

><p> 'Get these demons off my back
 Just get them off my back.

> 'Cause I want to shimmer
 I want to shine
> I want to radiate
 I want to live
> I want to love
 I want to try to learn how not to hate'
> Shawn Mullins - Shimmer

Joey sat for a few moments before getting out of the truck. She had taken it this morning, after leaving the note for Bessie. She had then spent the day in Potdam, a small town a few miles away. She had sat on the beach, watching people having fun and thinking. She had played her conversation with Dawson over and over in her mind. There was a part of her wishing she had just accepted his idea. It would have been so simple - she and Dawson, married. It had been what she dreamed of when she was fourteen. Then there was another part, the part that told her she was helping Dawson by not weighing him down. She knew he had a great future ahead of him, and she couldn't refuse him that. Then there was the voice that had spoken to him yesterday. The part that wanted so much more for herself than she would get by

having a baby at 18. Finally, there was a desperate voice, desperate for guidance and comfort. That part of her wished her mommy was still there. She wanted to curl up in her mother's lap, and be rocked whilst her mother's hand stroked her hair. That part wanted her to be a child again, and every other part was against this - most of Joey was an adult, combating against her painful childhood, wishing for a more settled life as an adult. As a child, Joey had experienced so many painful things that she had no control over. And then her relationship with Dawson when she was 15 had been the same - he seemed to believe that this would be the one relationship he would have. Joey meanwhile knew something would happen to destroy this too. So she had backed out. Life seemed so much easier when you were alone, without relationships. There was no one to hurt, and no one to hurt you either. She craved loneliness. She knew it sounded bizarre, and cynical, but she wanted to be alone until she felt ready to get hurt again. First she had to heal her scars. And get rid of the different parts of her. She needed to be one person, not half a dozen.

* * *

><p> 'We've been down so long
 The end must be drawing near'

> Jewel - Down So Long

Joey's eyes darted about the room. Sat in one seat was Dawson. In another was his father. Stood in front of her was Bessie. Struggling against the urge to hug her sister, and breakdown into tears, Joey ran her hands through her hair.

"Jo," Bessie began, and then paused.

"I'm not gonna do this, OK? I'm going to go to my room and sleep," Joey said.

"No. We are going to do this. And now," Dawson said slowly.

"Why? So you can ask me to marry you again?" Joey asked. "Because marriage is not the answer to this problem."

"I don't believe abortion is," Dawson pointed out. "At least explain to me why you want to kill our child."

"Because I don't want that life. Because I don't want a child of mine to have that life. I want to have a life. I want to give my child a loving home, a settled life, and parents who love them and each other."

"Why can't we provide that?" Dawson asked. It was clear to Bessie and Mitch that Dawson and Joey needed to talk this out together.

"Dawson, what you and I had was one of two things. I'm not sure whether it was a teenage romance, or a deep and meaningful connection of soul mates. But I do know that neither of those situations is stable enough to raise a child in. What happens the next time I kiss another guy?"

"I trust you not to do that again."

"I'm 18, Dawson! Of course I'm gonna kiss a guy that's not you! Haven't the past six years taught you anything? My Dad cheated on my mum, and left us. Your mom cheated on your dad, and she left you both. Bodie just left Bessie. No fight or anything. He just went. No relationship lasts."

"But can't we at least try?" Dawson begged.

"I don't want to, Dawson. I'm not strong enough to survive if you left me to go and pursue your dream. I wish none of this were happening. But it is. And I can't do the one thing that I want to do. I can't go to my mom and curl up on her lap. I can't have her rock me and tell me it's all ok again. I can't do that because she died. She left me."

End
file.